

child, who are helping feed the hungry, who are providing shelter for the homeless.

See, our society is changing and will continue to change one heart and one soul at a time, because our fellow citizens have heard the call to love a neighbor. And my call to you all is if you see somebody who hurts, help him. Remember that Government can hand out money—we do a pretty good job of it at times—but what we can't do is put hope in a person's heart or a sense of purpose in people's lives. That's done when a fellow citizen puts their arm around somebody who hurts and says, "I love you. What can I do to help you?"

Now, this is a fabulous country. We've met the challenges that have been put to us. There will be other challenges to come. I stand confident before you, knowing that we can meet any challenge because of the greatness of the people who live in America.

Thanks for coming by today. May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless America. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:54 p.m. in the plant. In his remarks, he referred to Gale Roshon, owner, John Wright, general manager, and Bill Haines, press operator, Central Aluminum Co.; Gov. Bob Taft, Lt. Gov. Jennette Bradley, Secretary of State J. Kenneth Blackwell, and State Auditor Betty Montgomery of Ohio; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on Senate Passage of the "Healthy Forests Restoration Act"

October 30, 2003

I commend the Senate for passing the "Healthy Forests Restoration Act." The bipartisan support for this commonsense legislation demonstrates that we are united in our goal of returning our Nation's forests to health by eliminating unnatural overgrowth and promoting early community involvement in forest management planning.

Restoring forest health is important to the safety of our communities and to the protection of wildlife, endangered species, water supplies, and forest resources. I urge the House and Senate to quickly resolve the dif-

ferences in their bills so that I can sign this important legislation and we can fully implement my Healthy Forests Initiative.

Statement on Action in the Senate To Block an Up-or-Down Vote on the Nomination of Judge Charles W. Pickering, Sr.

October 30, 2003

Today a minority of Senators once again blocked an outstanding judicial nominee from receiving an up-or-down vote in the United States Senate. The nomination of Judge Charles Pickering has been languishing in the Senate for over 2 years. He is a good, fair-minded man, and the treatment he has received by a handful of Senators is a disgrace. Judge Pickering was previously confirmed by the Senate and has led a distinguished career, including as a Federal district court judge for over a decade. He has wide bipartisan support from those who know him best.

More than one-third of my nominees for the courts of appeals are still awaiting a vote. The continued obstruction by a willful minority of the Senate is bad for our country, harmful for the provision of justice for all Americans, and damaging to the smooth functioning of our judicial system. It hurts America, and it is wrong.

One year ago today, I proposed a commonsense plan to return fairness and dignity to the judicial confirmation process. This plan, which would apply no matter who is President or which party controls the Senate, included specific proposals to fix the underlying problems that have long undermined the confirmation process. One year later, certain Senators are continuing their obstructionist tactics and are continuing to filibuster fine men and women who would make outstanding appeals court judges.

I again urge the Senate to put aside partisan politics and work to find a solution that will repair the process and ensure that all judicial nominees are treated fairly and that all Americans experience timely justice in our Federal courts. As I have said before, let each Senator vote how he or she thinks best, but give the nominees a vote.

Proclamation 7727—National Hospice Month, 2003

October 30, 2003

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Hospice care plays an important role in American medicine by easing a patient's suffering while reaffirming individual dignity in a familiar, comfortable environment. Across our Nation, hospice care providers are assisting in hospitals, nursing homes, and private residences, offering physical, emotional, and spiritual support to patients who often have a short life expectancy.

Hospice teams consist of physicians, nurses, social workers, counselors, and volunteers who are experts in end-of-life issues. They offer pain management, therapy, nutrition, and other supportive care in the home or other comfortable surroundings, making it easier for patients, family members, and friends to spend time together in their loved one's final days. Hospice experts also offer grief counseling to friends and family members after their loss.

Every stage of human life deserves to be treated with respect and care. I commend all those who work and volunteer as hospice care providers. Their contributions make our Nation a better place.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 2003 as National Hospice Month. I encourage Americans to increase their awareness of hospice service and to observe this month with appropriate activities and programs.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., November 3, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on November 4.

Remarks at a Bush-Cheney Reception in San Antonio, Texas

October 30, 2003

The President. Thanks for the warm welcome. It is really good to be home, and it's good to be with so many friends. It seems like old home week here. [Laughter] I want to thank you all very much for your friendship and your strong support. I want to thank you for your prayers. I want to thank you for being my friend before I became the President—[laughter]—and my friend after I become the President—[laughter]—in 2009. No, no, we—[applause].

This is a fantastic event tonight. It not only lifts my spirits to be with a lot of people with whom I've served in the past and a lot of friends, but we're laying the foundation for what is going to be a great national victory in 2004. I'm loosening up—[laughter]—and I'm getting ready. But politics will come in its own time, because I've got a job to do.

Audience member. And you're doing a great one.

The President. Well, thank you very much. [Laughter] I'm focused on the people's business. I'm doing what's right for this country. I will continue to work to make sure this country is strong and secure, prosperous, and free.

I have a regret, and that is that the First Lady is not with me tonight. She's in Tyler. We're going to meet up in Crawford. She is a fabulous wife, a fabulous mother, and a great First Lady for America.

I want to thank the Loefflers for their friendship and their hard work. It's a fantastically successful event. As I look around, I see folks who hold high office. The chief justice of the supreme court is here, Tom Phillips; the attorney general is here, Greg Abbott; the secretary of agriculture is here, Susan Combs; Albert Hawkins, the commissioner of health and human services; Diane Rath, the workforce commissioner. I see Wentworth is here, the State senator; State Representative Jones and Edmund Kuempel and Ken Mercer. Thank you all for coming. It's great to see you again. I miss my buddies in the statehouse. I've got such fond memories of working with people here in the great State of Texas. It was a fantastic experience.